

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

DRIFT: A SEA-SOONER'S JOY, AND OTHER POEMS. By GEORGE ANGUS. Boston, pp. 100. Boston: Whiting & Fields.

Among the large circles of personal friends and acquaintances which George Arnold has left behind him, this handsomely printed collection of his poems will need no recommendation beyond the name of the author, who died before he wrote the wild, careworn poem which concludes the present volume. It is quite as touching as the poem, "On this day I complete my thirty-seventh year," written by Byron under very similar circumstances. It is full of the regret and passion of a noble, aspiring spirit, and rings out like a cry for help. It is as follows:

IN THE DARK

All shadows stand the silent cedar trees,  
And the darkness deepens as the stars grow;  
From the dark West comes a wandering breeze,  
And waves them to and fro.

A murky darkness lies along the sand,  
Where bright the sunbeams of the morning shone;  
And the eye vainly seeks, by sea and land,  
Some light to rest upon.

No large, pale star its glimmering vigil keeps;

An ink sky reflects an ink sky;

And the dark river, like a serpent, creeps  
To where its black pines lie.

Strange, salty odors through the darkness steal,  
And through the dark the ocean thunders roll;

Darkness gathers, stills, till I feel  
Its weight upon my soul.

I stretch my hands out in the empty air;  
I strain my eyes to see the many night;

Blackness of darkness! Father, hear my prayer,  
Grant me to see the light!

"MAY SLEEP, AND SLEEPING, DREAM OF ME,  
In dreams that lovers find so sweet;  
And I'll come to you, the love I make;  
That we in dreams may meet."

The same soft melancholy pervades more than three-fourths that Arnold wrote. Many of these little songs resemble those of Heine—whose pathos and beauty can be seen, however, with nothing of the sensuality which so frequently and so painfully distinguishes even Heine's sweetest poems.

Arnold's genius was also almost entirely lyrical in its tendencies. All his poems are musical, in every sense of the word, and many of them would be valuable suggestions to the composer. They are never highly imaginative, but always pleasantly fanciful. Delicacy, rather than depth, of thought is their principal feature, while the strong, frequently intense, feeling, which is always to be found in his poetical moods, entirely frees them from the artificiality which Aldrich managed to successfully blend with the daintiness he derives from a study of Keats. Indeed, the difference between Arnold and Aldrich, who are notwithstanding of strong points of resemblance in their works, is just about the difference between "delicacy" and "daintiness." Another admirable quality of George Arnold, as a poet, is that he never wrote verse for the sake of writing. General literature was his profession, and he would hardly write to order reviews, criticisms, stories and comic trash by the yard measure, for the market; but it was his boast that he never wrote verse when not impelled to it by genuine poetic feeling; and an inspection of his works will convince the most critical that the assertion was not an idle one on his part. Personally, he was not devoid of affection, but his poems are unmarred with a single instance, that we can perceive. He may have been, as he describes himself, in his careless, "Cui Boni I."

A harp is slow, wasting useless days;

Am I? I live my comfort and my leisure;  
For these was well toil, tool for gold and praise;  
To me, this Summer-day brings more of pleasure.

\* So you, who wish for fame, good heed, pass by:  
We'll give you, I trust, a book which will;—  
Give me your rest, this book wherein I lie;  
And up no bare the labor and the hard!"

But, despite this seeming carelessness, the tone of other poems reveals an undercurrent bright and glittering with all the high hopes or dark and tumultuous with all the heart-breakings, of a passionate world-fretted nature. The poem entitled "Introspection" is specially prolific of passionate feeling, which reduces it from the impatience which might otherwise be invoked, that it resembles too closely, both in rhythm and spirit, Owen Meredith's longer poem of "Lost Words." And in the following stanzas may be seen the wary shrinking from that recklessness and somewhat looseness of private life, which the poet was fond of defending with cynical philosophy:

THE LIES OF LIFE.

I have had my will.  
Tested every pleasure.  
I have drunk my fill  
Of wine, and eaten well;  
It has lost its seat,  
Sorrow is my biter, bitter—  
O, the lees are bitter, bitter—  
I have had my rest.

Ever since I left the boat,  
Ran home over with bilges,  
Made my very soul  
Drunk with crimson kisses;  
But I drink it dry,  
Love is a lie, and by—  
O, the lees are bitter, bitter—  
Let me die!

Arnold mostly, however, drew his inspiration from pleasanter phases of life. As Mr. Winter, the editor of the present volume, observes in his brief biographical sketch of the author: "He loved to think of quiet woodland scenes, of a passionate world-fretted nature. The poem entitled "Introspection" is specially prolific of passionate feeling, which reduces it from the impatience which might otherwise be invoked, that it resembles too closely, both in rhythm and spirit, Owen Meredith's longer poem of "Lost Words." And in the following stanzas may be seen the wary shrinking from that recklessness and somewhat looseness of private life, which the poet was fond of defending with cynical philosophy:

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